2762

The Dean of St. *PAUL's*

SERMON

BEFORE

The Lord MAYOR,

AT

St. *BRIDGET's* Church, on *Tuesday* in *Easter*-Week. 1692.

Stamp, MAYOR.

Jovis xiv. die April' 1692. *Annoq; Regis & Regine* Wiliel & Mariæ, Angliæ, *&c. quarto.*

THIS Court doth desire the Reverend Doctor *Sherlock*, Dean of St. *Paul's*, to print his Sermon preached at St. *Bridget's* Church on *Tuesday* in *Easter*-Week last, before the Lord Mayor, Aldermen, and Governors of the several Hospitals of this City.

GOODFELLOW.

The Charity of Lending without Usury.

AND

The True Notion of Usury briefly stated.

IN A

SERMON

Preach'd before the

RIGHT HONOURABLE

The Lord MAYOR,

AT

St. *BRIDGET's* Church, on *Tuesday* in *Easter*-Week. 1692.

By WILLIAM SHERLOCK, D. D.
Dean of St. *Paul's*, Master of the *Temple*, and Chaplain in Ordinary to Their MAJESTIES.

IMPRIMATUR.

April 23. 1692. *GEO. ROYSE.*

LONDON:
Printed for *William Rogers* at the *Sun*, over-against St. *Dunstan's* Church in *Fleetstreet*. MDCXCII.

VI. Luke 35.

But love ye your enemies, —— (and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again,) *and your reward ſhall be great, and ye ſhall be the children of the Higheſt, for he is kind to the unthankful, and to the evil.*

UR Conformity to the Death and Reſurrection of our Saviour, conſiſts in dying to ſin, and walking in newneſs of life, which St. *Paul* tells us is repreſented by the External Ceremony of Baptiſm; the baptized Perſon being buried with Chriſt in Baptiſm, and riſing out of his watry grave a new born Creature, 6. *Rom.* 3, 4. *For in that he died, he died unto ſin once; but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God: Likewiſe reckon ye alſo your ſelves to be dead indeed unto ſin, but alive unto God, through Jeſus Chriſt*

our Lord, 9, 10. And the principal Exerciſe of this Divine Life, which is our conformity to the Reſurrection of Chriſt, is a Divine Converſation. *If ye then be riſen with Chriſt, ſeek thoſe things which are above, where Chriſt ſitteth at the right hand of God: Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth*, Col. 1, 2. And *to ſet our affections on things above*, does not only ſignify to think ſometimes of Heaven, and to deſire to go to Heaven when we dye, which very worldly-minded men may do; but to lay up for our ſelves Treaſures in Heaven, which are durable and eternal, in oppoſition to thoſe periſhing Treaſures on Earth, which are ſubject to Thieves, to Moths and Ruſt. 6. *Matth.* 19. 20, 21. *To make to our ſelves friends of the mammon of unrighteouſneſs, that when we fail, they may receive us into everlaſting habitations*, 16. Luke 9. Now ye all know what this means: *viz.* To purge our minds from the love of Riches, and from all covetous Deſires; to improve our Eſtates in Acts of Piety and Charity, for the Service of God, and to ſupply the wants of the poor and miſerable: to return our Money into the other World, where it will en-

encreaſe into Eternal Life and Glory: for this is truly to have our Converſation in Heaven, to live above this World, to ſit looſe from all the Enjoyments of it; to live to God, and another World, to improve every thing we enjoy here, to ſecure and advance our future Happineſs: when men are Charitable upon theſe Principles and theſe deſigns, they muſt live a very heavenly Life; *For where our Treaſure is, there our hearts will be alſo.*

This our Anceſtors, who appointed this Annual Solemnity, ſeem to have been very ſenſible of, That there is no particular Grace or Vertue, the exerciſe of which is a more viſible demonſtration of a Divine and purified Mind, which is riſen with Chriſt, and lives to God, as Chriſt doth, than the Grace of Charity; and therefore that there was no time more proper to exerciſe Charity, and to exhort Chriſtians to Charity, and to ſhow Charity in all its Pomp, and humble Bravery, than the Feaſt of the Reſurrection; wherein we commemorate the Love of our Lord in dying for us, and his triumph over Death, and in full aſſurance of a bleſſed Immor-

Immortality, of which the Reſurrection of our Saviour was an ocular Demonſtration, ſend our Hearts and our Eyes after him to Heaven, and contemplate that Glory to which he is advanced, and to which he has promiſed to advance us.

This then is my proper work at this time, to exhort you to Charity; proper both to the nature of this holy Feaſt, and to the original Inſtitution of this Solemnity; and it may reaſonably be hoped, that the Annual Returns of it, wherein all the Arguments to Charity are ſo earneſtly preſſed on you, ſhould keep this Divine Fire always burning and glowing in your Breaſts. You have ſo often heard all the Arguments to Charity, that it is impoſſible you ſhould forget them; and there is one that is worth all the reſt, which no Chriſtian can forget, who remembers that there is a Heaven and a Hell, and which no Chriſtian can reſiſt, without deſpiſing his Soul, and Eternal Life and Death; and that is, That Heaven is the Reward of Charity; that Hell is the Puniſhment of Uncharitableneſs; which is ſo plainly and expreſly taught,

and

and ſo frequently repeated by our Saviour, that it is as certain and unavoidable, as that there is a Heaven and a Hell; and if Heaven be not a ſufficient Encouragement to Charity, nor Hell ſufficient to deter us from Uncharitableneſs, it is to no purpoſe to uſe any other Arguments, which can never perſuade, if theſe can't; or if they could, would neither carry us to Heaven, nor keep us out of Hell; for to be charitable only for temporal reaſons, is to give our goods to feed the poor, without a true Divine Charity; which St. *Paul* tells us, will profit nothing, 1 *Cor.* 13. For ſuch a Charity as does not raiſe us above this world, can neither carry us to Heaven, nor keep us out of Hell. And therefore inſtead of drawing together all the Arguments for Charity which you have ſo often heard, and ſhewing them in a new dreſs, my deſign at preſent is to recommend to you a very excellent, but a very neglected part of Charity, which our Saviour preſſes on us in my Text, *viz.* The Charity of Lending, *Do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again.*

In ſpeaking to which Words, I ſhall 1. Shew you what this Duty is. 2. What an excellent

Charity it is to lend. And how this may be improved to the moſt excellent purpoſes.

1. What this Duty is, or what our Saviour means by *lending, hoping for nothing again.* And it can ſignifie but two things; and I ſee no reaſon to think, but that our Saviour might mean both. 1. To Lend, without hoping for any encreaſe; or to lend freely, without Uſury. 2. To lend, where the very Principal may be in danger, when we have little reaſon to hope that we ſhall ever ſee our own again.

1. To lend freely, without Uſury; for our Saviour commands this, as an Act of Charity, *Do good, and lend*: And tho to lend, even upon Uſury, may in many caſes prove a great kindneſs to the Borrower, yet Charity is not the motive of the Lender, it is not Charity, but Traffick and Merchandize of Money: And tho the *Jews* were expreſly forbid to lend their Brethren upon Uſury, yet our Saviour intimates there was ſomething like this, and equivalent to it, which ſpoiled the Charity of lending, even without Uſury; that they would not lend to the poor; who though they ſhould repay them what

what they borrowed, yet were never likely to be in a condition to lend to them again; but they would lend to the Rich, from whom they expected the like returns of kindneſs; as you may ſee in the Verſes before my Text; 33, 34. *And if ye do good to them that do good to you, what thank have ye? for ſinners alſo do even the ſame. And if ye lend to them, of whom ye hope to receive,* (not only your own, but the like kindneſs of lending to you when your occaſions require it), *what thank have ye? for ſinners alſo lend to ſinners, to receive as much again;* τὰ ἴσα, equal returns of kindneſs; which if it be not Uſury of Money, is Uſury of Kindneſſes, but is not Charity; like inviting our Rich Friends and Neighbours to a Feaſt, who can invite us again; which tho it be no fault, is no Charity; for that conſiſts in entertaining the poor, who can make us no return, 14. *Luke* 12, 13, 14. And thus our Saviour exhorts us here, but *do you do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again;* neither for Uſury, nor for ſuch returns and exchanges of kindneſs.

It was for the ſake of this Duty, that Uſury was ſo ſtrictly forbidden by the *Jewiſh* Law, that men might the more freely lend

their Money to thoſe who wanted, when they had no preſent uſe for it themſelves; and had no way to encreaſe it; and as far as the Reaſon and Charity of this Law extends, ſo far it ſtill obliges, and ſo far Uſury is ſtill forbid to Chriſtians.

This is not well conſidered by thoſe who ſo univerſally condemn all Uſury; and becauſe the right underſtanding of this will be of great uſe to ſettle ſome mens minds, and to explain and enforce this duty of lending, which I now recommend to you, it cannot be thought a digreſſion from my preſent Deſign, to give you the true, but ſhort ſtate of this matter.

It is confeſſed on all hands, That Uſury is forbid by the Law of *Moſes*; but the great miſtake is concerning the Nature of Uſury, or what that is which the Law forbids and condemns by the name of Uſury.

Some think that all Increaſe of Money, when men lend a Sum of Money to receive the Principal again with Intereſt, is the Uſury which the Law forbids; and therefore that this is abſolutely unlawful in all caſes, and in all degrees; though we all know, That Trade,

Trade, to which we owe all the Riches and Greatneſs of our Nation, and ſo many excellent Charities too, cannot be maintained without it: That ſome men, who now live comforrably in the world, maintain their Families with Credit and Reputation, and do many acts of Charity themſelves, could not Trade at all; others could not drive ſuch flouriſhing and ſpreading Trades without borrowed Money, nor borrow without Intereſt: That many Widows and Orphans are maintained by Intereſt, who muſt in a few years be Beggars, had they no other way to live, but to ſpend the Principal. This is ſo contrary to the ſenſe and reaſon of mankind, and to all the rules of Juſtice and Charity, and ſo impracticable in the preſent ſtate of the world, that while it is poſſible to put any other ſenſe upon the Law, I would never think of this. And the comfort is, that the Law expounds it ſelf otherwiſe, and gives no colour for ſuch an Interpretation as this, That all Increaſe of Money is forbid by it.

For 1. The Law it ſelf allowed the *Jews* to take Uſury of Strangers of other Countries,

tries, though not of their Brethren, or natural *Jews*, 23. *Deut.* 20. *Unto a ſtranger thou mayeſt lend upon uſury, but unto thy brother thou ſhalt not lend upon uſury.* And therefore God did not abſolutely forbid the *Jews* to encreaſe their Money, for they might lend to ſtrangers upon Uſury; which proves, that this was not an univerſal Law to them, much leſs is it ſo to all mankind. And that proves that there is no moral and intrinſick evil in Uſury; for if all Uſury had in its own nature been unlawful, God could not have allowed the *Jews* to take Uſury of ſtrangers; for he cannot allow the leaſt moral evil. The truth is, I never could yet ſee the leaſt ſhadow of an Argument to prove, that Uſury is evil in its nature, unleſs that Money can't beget Money, be thought an Argument; but that is as good an Argument againſt buying Corn or Wine, or any thing elſe with Money; for it is unnatural for Money to beget Corn or Wine: But if the barren nature of Money, that it cannot naturally propagate it ſelf, be a reaſon againſt Uſury of Money, this is no reaſon againſt Uſury of Corn, which is equally forbid: for it is natural for

Corn

Corn to propagate its kind, and multiply it ſelf; and yet the Uſury of all Victuals is as much forbid, as the Uſury of Money, 23. *Deut.* 19. Now if Uſury be not morally evil, it can be unlawful to none, but thoſe to whom God has forbid it; and there being no prohibition of it in the New Teſtament, which is the Law of the Chriſtian Church, it cannot be unlawful to Chriſtians, whatever it was to the *Jews*.

2. And yet the *Jews* themſelves were not expreſly forbid, however they might underſtand it, to lend their Money upon Uſury, to All their own Brethren, but only to the Poor: So that had any Rich *Jew* come to borrow Money of them, for any thing that appears by the Law, they might have lent Money to him upon Uſury. This Obſervation will clear this whole matter; and therefore I ſhall turn you to all the Texts of the Law, which forbid Uſury, and the reading of them will convince you, That Uſury was forbid only in favour of the Poor.

The firſt Text is, 22. Exod. 25. *If thou lend money to any of my people that is poor by thee,*

thee, thou ſhalt not be to him as an Uſurer, neither ſhalt thou lay upon him Uſury: Where no Uſury is forbid, but only lending to the poor upon Uſury: Thus 25. *Lev.* 35, 36, 37. *And if thy brother be waxen poor, and fallen to decay with thee, then thou ſhalt relieve him. ---Take thou no uſury of him, nor increaſe, but fear God, that thy brother may live well with thee: Thou ſhalt not give him thy money upon Uſury, nor lend him thy victuals for increaſe.* It is true, in the Repetition of this Law, 23. *Deut.* 19, 20. it is only ſaid, *Thou ſhalt not lend upon uſury to thy brother, uſury of money, uſury of victuals, uſury of any thing that is lent upon uſury. Unto a ſtranger thou mayeſt lend upon uſury, but unto thy brother thou ſhalt not lend upon uſury, that the Lord thy God may bleſs thee in all that thou ſetteſt thine hand unto, in the land whither thou goeſt to poſſeſs.* This ſeems to forbid lending upon Uſury to any *Jew*, whether Rich or Poor; but this being only a repetition of thoſe Laws in *Exodus* and *Leviticus*, in all reaſon muſt be expounded by them; and though the poor are not expreſſed, the Circumſtances of the place prove, that they only are meant; for though Rich men may ſometimes have

have occaſion to borrow Money, yet none but the Poor, who have no Money to buy can ever have occaſion to borrow Victuals upon Uſury; and the difference the Law makes between a Brother and a Stranger ſhews, that it is intended as an Act of Charity, which they owe to their Brethren, though not to Strangers. For which Reaſon alſo they were forbid to make any of their Brethren Bondmen, though they might buy the Children of the Heathen and Strangers for Bond-men and Bond-maids, 25 *Levit.* 39. *&c.* and the Bleſſing God promiſes ſhews, that it is the Reward of Charity.

In other places, where Uſury is mentioned, ſome Circumſtance or other determines it to the Poor. This was the caſe, when *Nehemiah* reproved the Nobles and the Rulers for exacting Uſury, 5 *Nehem.* When the Prophet *Iſaiah* threatens great Deſolations againſt the Land, he thus deſcribes it, *And it ſhall be as with the People, ſo with the Prieſt---- as with the Lender, ſo with the Borrower, as with the taker of Uſury, ſo with the giver of Uſury to him,* 24 Iſai. 2. That is, the Lender and the Uſurer ſhall be reduced to the ſame Diſtreſs and Poverty, as

thoſe ſuffer, who borrow upon Uſury; which ſhews, that none but poor men uſed to borrow upon Uſury in thoſe days. Thus when the Prophet *Jeremiah* complains, *Woe is me my Mother, that thou haſt born me a man of ſtrife, and a man of contention to the whole earth, I have neither lent on Uſury, nor men have lent to me on Uſury, yet every one of them doth curſe me*, 15 Jer. 10. it plainly intimates, that Uſury is ſuch an Oppreſſion of the Poor, as both deſerves and very often procures Curſes. And therefore the Prophet *Ezekiel* joyns Uſury with the Oppreſſion of the Poor, and other acts of Violence, 18 *Ezek.* 7, 8, 10, 11, 16, 17. *He who hath oppreſſed the poor and needy, hath ſpoiled by violence, hath not reſtored the pledge, hath given forth upon Uſury, and hath taken Increaſe, he ſhall die. But he that hath neither oppreſſed the poor, nor hath with-holden the pledge, neither hath ſpoiled by violence, but hath given his bread to the hungry, and cloathed the naked with a garment, that hath taken off his hand from the poor, that hath not received Uſury nor Increaſe, he ſhall live.* Which makes it very plain, what is meant by Uſury, when to take Uſury is joyned with Violence and Oppreſſion

preſſion of the Poor; and to lend without Uſury is rekoned among Acts of great Charity and Goodneſs.

There is but one place more, as I remember, that mentions Uſury, 15 *Pſalm* 5. and there putting forth Money to Uſury is joyned with taking a Reward againſt the Innocent, which ſhews, that it was an Act of Violence and Oppreſſion. For indeed among the Jews, who were no Merchants, nor maintained any Foreign Trade with other Nations, no men had occaſion to borrow Money, much leſs Victuals, but to ſupply their preſent wants, and to take advantage of the Neceſſities of the Poor, to increaſe their own Fortunes by increaſing their Poverty, was againſt all the Laws of Goodneſs and Charity; and therefore this Uſury, which was the only Uſury known in thoſe days, is ſtrictly forbid, as all other acts of Oppreſſion are. All other kinds of Uſury are introduced by Trade and Commerce, and though it is againſt Charity to lend upon Uſury to men, who borrow to ſupply their wants, yet if men borrow to increaſe their Trade and Fortunes, there is Juſtice and Equity in it, that the Lender ſhall make ſome Increaſe of his

Money, as well as the Borrower. This is not properly Usury, but Traffick and Commerce, and I know no reason, why men may not Trade with Money, as well as with other Commodities.

And this I take to be the true reason, why the Jews were permitted to take Usury of Strangers, but not of their Brethren, because their Heathen Neighbours were Merchants, as is plain of *Tyre* and *Zidon*, 23 *Isai.* They improved their Money by Trade, and therefore it was fit they should pay Interest for it; especially if they were to lend upon Usury only to such Strangers as came among them for Trade, but did not dwell and sojourn with them; which seems probable from 25 *Levit.* 35. where the Stranger that sojourns with them seems to be entituled to the like Charity as a Brother. *If thy Brother be waxen poor, and fallen to decay, thou shalt relieve him, yea, though he be a stranger, or a sojourner, that he may live with thee, take thou no Usury of him, nor Increase.* For a *Stranger* never signifies a Proselyte of Justice, who by Circumcision was incorparated into the Body of *Israel*, made a Brother, and entituled to the Priviledges of a Natural Jew, but

but only a Proselyte of the Gate, who renounced Idolatry, but did not undertake the Observation of the Law of *Moses*; and yet they were not to take Usury of these Strangers if they were poor, no more than of their Brother, according to that Law, 22 *Exod.* 21. *Thou shalt not vex a stranger, nor oppress him, for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt.*

The Answer our Saviour gives to the Servant who hid his Talent in the Napkin, seems to justifie this Account, unless we can suppose, that his Lord would have been pleased with unjust and wicked Gain. 25. Matth. 27. *Thou oughtest to have put my money to the Exchangers, and then at my coming, I should have received mine own with Usury.* So that though it was unlawful to lend Money upon Usury to the Poor, it was not so to the Exchangers, who traded in Money. And our Saviour's driving the Money-Changers out of the Temple, no more proves that he disallowed that Profession, than that he disallowed selling Oxen, and Sheep, and Doves for Sacrifice, for he drove them out also; the Fault was not in the Merchandise no more of Money, than of Sheep, or Oxen, or Doves, but they made *his Father's house, a house*

houſe of merchandiſe. 2 John 14, 15. *&c.*

It is certain the ancient Fathers, who were profeſſed Enemies to Uſury, oppoſed it under this Notion; for their great Arguments againſt Uſury, are levelled againſt Uncharitableneſs and Oppreſſion of the Poor, as appears from *Gregor. Nyſſen*, St. *Ambroſe*, St. *Baſil*, and others; and yet it is no wonder, ſhould we meet with ſome Paſſages in them againſt Uſury conſidered, as Trading and Merchandiſe of Money: For it is well known, that they were not much greater Friends, to Trade and Merchandiſe, than they were to Uſury, which they thought unbecoming a Chriſtian, as miniſtring only to Covetouſneſs and Luxury. And yet I ſuppoſe, the greateſt Enemies at this day to Uſury, will not carry the Quarrel ſo far, as to condemn Merchandiſe. And yet under this Notion of Covetouſneſs and ſordid Gain (which is equally applicable to all Trade.) Uſury is forbid the Clergy by the Seventeenth Cannon of the Firſt Council of *Nice*; but no Council ever forbad it to the Layety, or threatned Church Cenſures againſt them for it, which they would certainly have done, had they thought it evil in its ſelf.

This

This may ſatisfie us in what Sence Uſury is forbid, both by the Law of *Moſes* and the ancient Writers of the Chriſtian Church, *viz.* as contrary to Charity; when we lend upon Uſury, where Charity requires us to lend freely: When we take Increaſe of the Poor, who borrow to ſupply their Wants, and ſink them ſtill more irrecoverably into Poverty by ſuch Exactions: This always was, and always will be hateful to God, and to all Good Men, and yet ſuch deteſtable Uſurers there are among us, who grow rich upon the Ruins and Spoils of the Poor, and drink the Tears of Widows and Orphans; but when to lend without Uſury is no Charity, and to take Uſury is no Oppreſſion, there Uſury it ſelf is no Crime.

And hence we learn (which is the great thing I aimed at) that Uſury was forbid only for the ſake of lending, which proves, that to lend freely to the Poor, is a great and neceſſary Act of Charity: Though a Man never took a Penny for Uſury in his Life, yet if he neither gives, nor lends to the Poor, he is guilty of all that Uncharitableneſs, for which Uſury is condemned; nay in moſt Caſes, even theſe worſt ſort of Uſurers are the more charitable Men,

Men: For excepting some very hard Cases, it is greater Charity to lend even to the Poor for Usury, than not to lend at all.

For this Reason the Emperour *Leo* was forced by a new Constitution to permit Usury, which his Father out of a pious Zeal, had wholly forbid, because he found, that when Men were forbid to take any Usury, they would not lend at all, which was a greater Hardship to the Poor, than Usury it self.

Meerly not to take Usury is no Vertue, but to lend to the Poor without Usury is. To lock up our Money in our Chests to rust and canker, and to do no good with it, is what St. *James* so severely threatens rich Men for, *Go now ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries, which shal come upon you; your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth eaten; your gold and your silver is cankered, and the rust of them shall be a Witness against you*, a Witness of your Covetousness and Uncharitableness, that you have done no good with it, but hoarded it up to rust and canker for want of use. 5 *James* 1, 2, 3.

This Controversie then may be stated and decided in a few words. Usury is a very great Sin,

Sin, that is, to lend our Money upon Usury to those who borrow for Necessity and Want, and to exact such Payments with Rigour and Severity, to strip such miserable People of that little that remains, to imprison their Persons, and make them end their Lives in a Goal. To lock up our Money, and do no good with it, is to hide our Talent in a Napkin; for Money is improveable, and must be improved, either for Charity or Increase, to be a new and perpetual Spring of Charity. To declaim against Usury, and not to exhort men to lend to the Poor, without Usury is to mistake or overlook the true End and Design of the Law, and to betray uncharitable Men to a greater Evil than Usury it self; but if men lend freely to the Poor in such Proportions, as Charity requires, they may very innocently and virtuously, without transgressing this Law against Usury, lend their Money for Encrease to the Rich.

But our Saviour seems to mean something more by *lending, hoping for nothing again*, not only to lend freely without Usury, but to lend, where the Principal may be in Danger, when we cannot reasonably promise our selves to receive our own again: no man can deny, but

this is great Charity; but then this must be conducted by the measures and proportions of giving: what Charity will oblige us to give, it will as reasonably oblige us to lend, but where the Return is very hazardous, it can oblige us to lend, no more than what it would become us to give, and yet in such Cases, lending may be a greater Charity than giving, which is the Second thing proposed, which I can speak but briefly to.

2. The Excellency and Advantages of this Charity of Lending, and how it may be improvdd to the best Purpose.

Now if we compare Giving and Lending together, Lending has much the Advantage of Giving, as to the true End and Purposes of Charity.

To Lend is a greater Obligation, to Industry than to give, and there cannot be a greater Kindness done to the Poor, next to keeping them from starving, than to teach them Industry. I need not tell you that there are many Poor, who will never work, while they

can meet with charitable People to give; nay, who chuse to be sick, to be lame, to be blind, to move Charity, rather than work to supply their Wants; but when Men have nothing to live on, but the Improvement of lent Money, which they know, they must repay, when it is called for, this must make them industrious; for it both encourages their Industry, and keeps the Rod over them; especially were this made a standing Rule to give nothing to those, who are able, but will not work, who have a Stock but chuse to trade with, and neglect to improve it.

Thus what we give does but one single Act of Charity, for we can give it but once, but what we lend may circulate, as the Blood does in our Veins, and communicate Warmth and Spirits to more Parts of the Body than one: that is, what we lend may be lent again, and do a great many successive Charities, as great, or greater than that one single Charity had been, if we had given it to. And that certainly is one of the greatest and noblest Charity, which is most diffusive.

But yet to make this Charity of Lending the more effectual, it must be confeſſed, that a Publick Bank of Charity raiſed out of ſuch free Loans, will have many Advantages above any Private Acts of this Nature; and I can by no means think this either impracticable or difficult.

I doubt not but moſt of this Honourable Aſſembly could contrive very Advantageous ways of doing this, were men but Charitably diſpoſed. For ſuppoſe, you ſhould make your Hoſpitals, or your Companies, ſuch Publick Banks, or if it could be more Publick, ſtill the more Uſeful, and the more ſecure, where charitable People, may ſafely depoſite their Money without Uſe, or thoſe who cannot ſpare the whole Intereſt, may abate ſome part of it, and where the running Caſh may be lodged, which Men expect no Intereſt for, this might eaſily riſe to a very vaſt Sum, which with wiſe Improvement would make a ſure and laſting Fund of Charity.

And could any thing in the World be more eaſie than this, which no man could feel? What

What would it be to a Rich Man, who has many thousands employed in Trade, or secured at Interest; or if he knows when he has enough, has no need to increase it, to drop some thousands into such a free Bank, to sanctifie and prosper his Trade, and other ways of Gain, and to secure a Blessing to his Posterity? How many others are there, who could spare a hundred, or it may be some hundred pounds out of their Stock, and not feel the want of Interest, or at least, if they could not spare the whole Interest, might spare the half, or third part of it? How many are there, who have some hundreds by them useless, which they would not, and could not with any reason grudge to lay up in a safe Bank? How many are there, who would easily be perswaded to lend, were there such a safe Bank to receive it, who are very unwilling to give? And were there such a Bank of Charity once setled, there would be very little need of giving.

For I know not any kind of Charity, but might be provided for in this way, were men but free and liberal in lending. It would enlarge

large your Hospitals, clear your Streets of Beggars, the great Reproach of this City; maintain those who can't work, and employ those who can; put poor Children to Apprentice, provide Stocks for Ingenious and Industrious Young Men, who want them, redeem Prisoners, and, which Justice and Honour requires of you, as far as possibly you can, may in some measure provide a Fund for your Orphans.

This would advance the Glory of this great City, it would perpetuate and consecrate the Memory of such worthy Persons, as would begin and promote such a lasting and extensive Charity; the Children which are unborn, would rise up and call them blessed; it would draw a great share of the Charitable Money of the Nation into your hands, which would quicken Trade, and increase your Riches, and above all, it would procure all the great Rewards which are promised to Charity, both in this World, and in the next.

But whatever becomes of this Proposal, you must always remember, that it is great Charity to lend as well as to give: This is what

our

our Saviour expects from us, this is what he Commands, *To do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again*; and if out of a greedy desire of gain, we will lend nothing freely to the Relief and Encouragement of the Industrious Poor, this will make all our other Usury and Increase, which is Lawful and Innocent in it self, when it neither Oppresses the Poor, nor stops our Charity, to become sin.

FINIS.

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